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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received

date entered

See instructions in How to Complete National Register Forms  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Headquarters, Commander in Chief, Pacific Fleet

and/or common CINCPAC Headquarters

2. Location

street & number

not for publication

city, town Pearl Harbor Naval Base vicinity of

state Hawaii code 15 county Honolulu code 003

3. Classification

<b>Category</b>	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Present Use</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name U.S. Navy

street & number

city, town Washington vicinity of state D.C.

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. U.S. Navy

street & number

city, town Washington state D.C.

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☒ no

date ☐ federal ☐ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records

city, town state

## 7. Description

### Condition

☐ excellent  
☒ good  
☐ fair

☐ deteriorated  
☐ ruins  
☐ unexposed

### Check one

☐ unaltered  
☒ altered

### Check one

☒ original site  
☐ moved date \_\_\_\_\_

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Constructed in 1942, the headquarters building for the Commander in Chief Pacific Fleet was built on Makalapa Hill, across Kamehameha Highway from Halawa Gate, Pearl Harbor Naval Base. Originally, the white, reinforced-concrete structure had two stories above ground and a bombproof basement. By early 1945, an additional story had been built on top of the building. The upper stories were encircled by wide lanais, or verandas, which eliminated interior corridors. The basement contained communication equipment. A separate concrete wall parallels the rear wall of the building, providing protection to the ground floor against small-arms fire. This barrier has a narrow, Marine-guarded gateway that provides access to the structure. On the opposite, front side is a large covered entry way. The building stands 300 yards beyond the boundaries of the Pearl Harbor National Historic Landmark.

Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, Commander in Chief, Pacific Fleet, moved his office into the new building in August 1942. He sat in a corner behind a flat double desk. Other furniture in the corner room consisted of split bamboo chairs with flowered cushions. Window drapes matched the cushions. The windows provided views of Pearl Harbor and the Koolau Range. Maps of the Pacific Ocean area were tacked to the walls and a barometer was attached to a pipe behind the desk. On one wall Nimitz posted a sign that read

1. Is the proposal likely to succeed?
2. What might be the consequence of failure?
3. Is it in the realm of practicability of materials and supplies?

On the desk was a pen set, several ashtrays, a miniature machine gun, a metal bumblebee (the symbol of the Seabees), and a photograph of General Douglas MacArthur.

Today, the building continues to house the Commander in Chief, Pacific Fleet, and his staff.

## 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
prehistoric	archeology-prehistoric	community planning	landscape architecture	religion
1400-1499	archeology-historic	conservation	law	science
1500-1599	agriculture	economics	literature	sculpture
1600-1699	architecture	education	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> military	social/
1700-1799	art	engineering	music	humanitarian
1800-1899	commerce	exploration-settlement	philosophy	theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	communications	industry	politics government	transportation
		invention		other (specify)

Specific dates 1942-1945 Builder Architect

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Shortly after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, Admiral Husband E. Kimmel, Commander in Chief, Pacific Fleet (CINCPAC), was suspended from command. Admiral Chester W. Nimitz became the new commander and arrived at Pearl Harbor Christmas Day 1941. Morale at Pearl Harbor had sunk to dismal depths, but Nimitz's arrival changed the situation. He restored confidence to the fleet. From 1942 until mid-December 1944 he commanded American land, sea, and air forces in the Central and North Pacific areas from his new headquarters at Pearl Harbor. From there he oversaw the Aleutians campaign, the successful Battle of Midway, the capture of Makin and Tarawa atolls in the Gilberts, the invasion of Kwajalein and Eniwetok in the Marshalls, the seizure of Saipan and Tinian in the Marianas, the liberation of Guam, and the capture of Peleliu and Angaur in the Palaus. He was a superb leader of men and "had an immense capacity for work, an equal talent at obtaining the best work from others, an almost impeccable judgment of men, and a genius for making prompt, firm decisions."<sup>1</sup> The CINCPAC building commemorates Admiral Nimitz and his deeds.

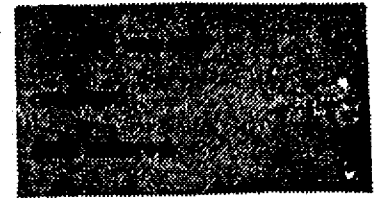
### Background

Chester William Nimitz was born in Fredericksburg, Texas, in 1885. Following graduation from the United States Naval Academy, he served a tour in China and then was assigned to submarine duty at Pearl Harbor. During World War I, he was the chief of staff to the commander of the submarine division, Atlantic Fleet. Between the wars, he commanded a cruiser division, then a battleship division. Promoted to rear admiral in 1938, he became chief of the Bureau of

1. Samuel Eliot Morison. The Rising Sun in the Pacific, 1931-April 1942. History of United States Naval Operations in World War II, vol. 3 (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1948, reprint 1982), p. 256.

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Navigation the next year. At Pearl Harbor Nimitz assumed command of the Pacific Fleet, with the rank of admiral, on December 31, 1941, aboard submarine Grayling.

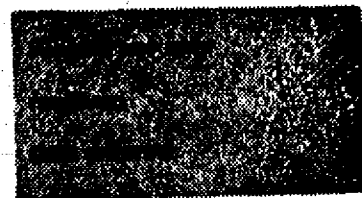
Just before Admiral Nimitz arrived at Pearl Harbor, the Japanese had captured Wake Island and morale at Pearl Harbor was at rock bottom. Nimitz displayed his leadership qualities by calling a staff meeting. He assured his demoralized officers that he had complete faith and confidence in them and that all of them would stay on the job. Morale immediately skyrocketed. Historians have described the admiral's character in admiring terms: gentle, courtley, ethical, endless patience, hard worker, efficient, never raised his voice, tactful, accessible, considerate, and the most beloved of fleet commanders.

Admiral Ernest J. King, Commander in Chief, U.S. Fleet, ordered Admiral Nimitz as his first priority, to maintain communications with Australia, chiefly by protecting the Hawaii-Samoa line. Concern was felt that the Japanese would break into that line from the new bases in the nearby Gilbert Islands. Nimitz depatched fast carriers Enterprise and Yorktown to escort a brigade of U.S. Marines to American Samoa. The task force then carried out the first air strikes and bombardments on Japanese bases, in the Gilberts and the Marshalls.

In May 1942 Admiral Nimitz gained a second title, Commander in Chief, Pacific Ocean Areas (CINCPOA), when he assumed command of all Allied armed forces in the Pacific Ocean area except the land defenses of New Zealand and General Douglas MacArthur's command, the Southwest Pacific Area. In these dual roles, Nimitz exercised strategic and broad tactical directions of all American forces, naval or army, in the Pacific. About this time, Nimitz's intelligence people broke many of the Japanese codes. Analyzing this data, Nimitz determined that the enemy was preparing to invade Midway and the Aleutians. By skillfully handling his scanty resources, he assembled a task force centered on three fast aircraft carriers. On June 4, 1942, American aircraft sank four Japanese carriers in the Battle of Midway. The

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Japanese navy never fully recovered and its expansion in the Pacific had been stopped. The American victory at Midway was the turning point of the Pacific war.

In 1943 Nimitz's forces defeated the enemy on Attu and forced the Japanese out of Kiska in the Aleutians. Shortly thereafter, the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff directed Nimitz to begin planning to take Japan's Marshall Islands in January 1944. Before then, however, American army and marine forces freed Makin and Tarawa atolls in the British Gilbert Islands. In January 1944, Nimitz's forces invaded Kwajalein and Roi-Namur islands in the Marshalls, capturing the first Japanese territory in the Pacific war. Nimitz's Central Pacific drive was underway.

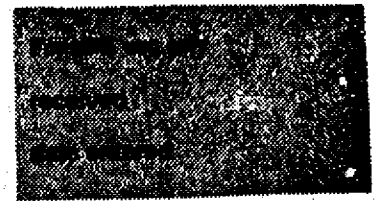
The year 1944 witnessed continuing successes: Enewetak Atoll, also in the Marshalls; Saipan and Tinian islands in the Northern Marianas, part of Japan's main defenses; the liberation of Guam; the capture of Peleliu and Angaur islands in the Palaus; the occupation of Ulithi Atoll and the Battle of the Philippine Sea which marked the conclusion of the Central Pacific drive.

In December 1944, Admiral Nimitz visited his forces in the Western Pacific and while on Guam selected a site (Nimitz Hill) for his advanced headquarters. A month later, he moved to Guam leaving the CINCPAC headquarters at Pearl Harbor to serve as a rear echelon headquarters.

Admiral Nimitz had enjoyed the Makalapa headquarters into which he had moved in August 1942 from the steamy submarine base. His routine at Makalapa was fairly simple. He arrived in his office from his nearby residence at 7:30 in the morning, his schnauzer, Makalapa, usually accompanying him. He began the day receiving reports from staff members. At 9:00 a.m., the morning staff conference began, either in Nimitz's office or in a nearby conference room. Always, the atmosphere was kept informal. Nimitz took a break at 10:00 a.m., often pistol shooting at a nearby range. He returned to his office for more desk work or a conference. Eleven a.m. was visiting time. Nimitz insisted that the commanders of all incoming

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naval vessels, from a humble barge to a magnificent battleship, call on him. The afternoons were unstructured and involved planning sessions, Nimitz's dropping in on his staff, or visiting naval or marine operations on Oahu. On quiet days, the admiral left the office at 4:00 or 4:30 p.m.

Before dinner, Nimitz took a long walk or played horseshoes or tennis. One of his characteristics on or off duty was his insistence on punctuality. If a visitor was expected at a certain time, he best not be late. If Nimitz was visiting the army commander, say at 7 p.m., the admiral would have his driver drive around a block a couple of times to be sure the car stopped at the general's door at precisely 7:00. Concerning generals, visitors to Nimitz's office were puzzled by General MacArthur's photograph on the desk. No warm feelings between the two men existed. Nimitz, while never making derogatory remarks about the general in public, confided to a friend that he kept the picture to remind him not to make Jovian pronouncements complete with thunderbolts.

Before he left for Guam, Admiral Nimitz was promoted to a new rank, Admiral of the Fleet, in December 1944. At his new headquarters on Guam, he continued to oversee combat operations: naval operations concerning MacArthur's recapture of the Philippines, the capture of Iwo Jima, and the conquest of Okinawa, the "last battle." On September 2, 1945, Japan's surrender was received aboard Nimitz's flagship, USS Missouri. The admiral witnessed the surrender for the United States of America (General MacArthur signed as the supreme commander of Allied powers). Following the war, Nimitz served as chief of operations, U.S. Navy. He retired in 1947 and died in 1966, a national hero.

## 9. Major Bibliographical Reference

See Continuation Sheet.

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property Less than one acre

Quadrangle name Pearl Harbor, Hawaii

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

### UTM References

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### Verbal boundary description and justification

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state code county code

state code county code

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Erwin N. Thompson, Historian

organization Western Regional Office, NPS

date July 10, 1986

street & number 450 Golden Gate Ave

telephone 556-4165

city or town San Francisco

state California

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

☐ national ☐ state ☐ local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title

date

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

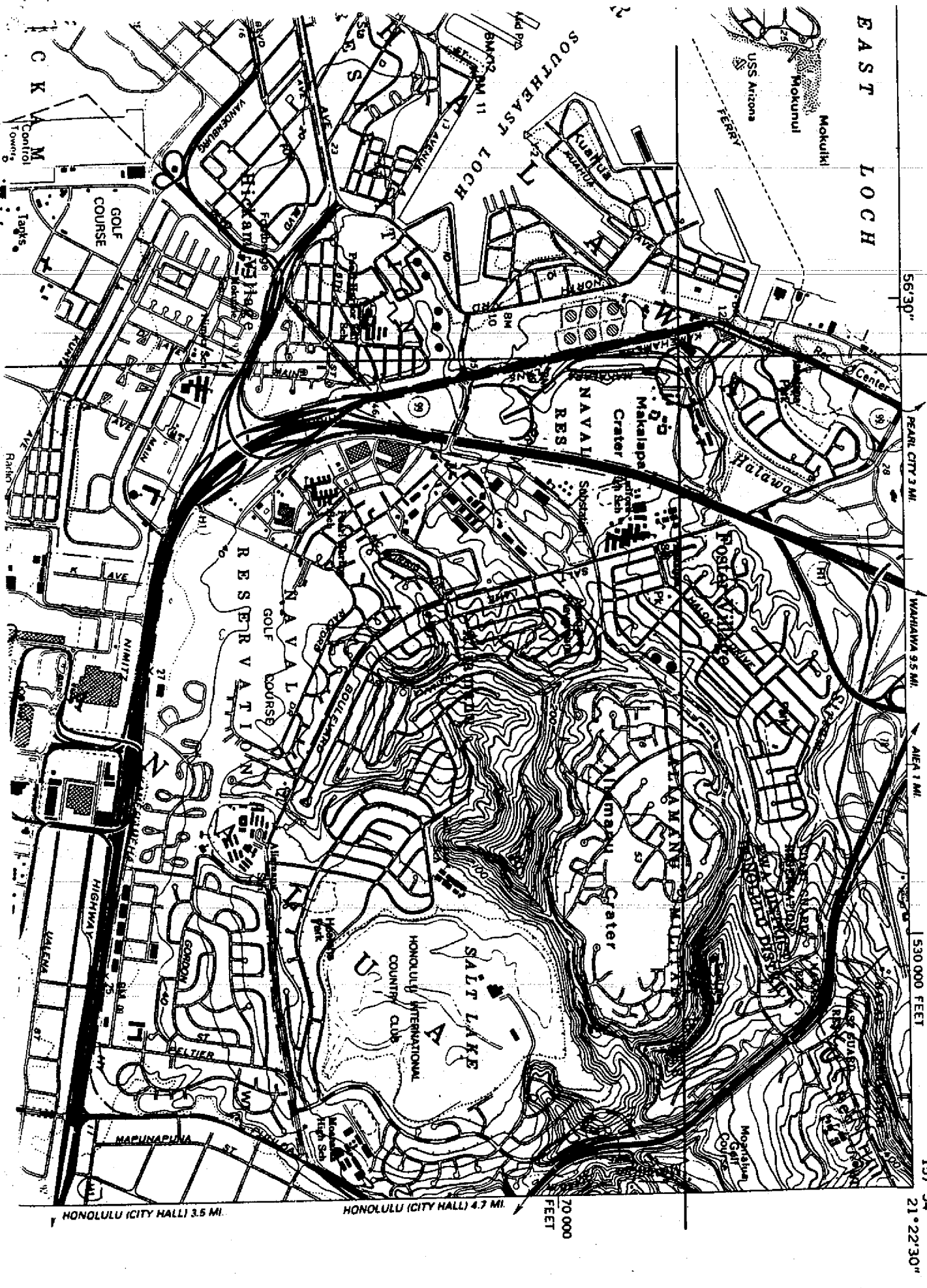
Chief of Registration

date

Headquarters, Commander in Chief, Pacific Fleet (CINCPAC Headquarters)  
 Pearl Harbor Quadrangle (1:24,000 scale)  
 A. 04/610 080/2363 040

PEARL HARBOR  
 HAWAII-HONOLULU CO,  
 ISLAND OF OAHU  
 7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

(KANE OHE)

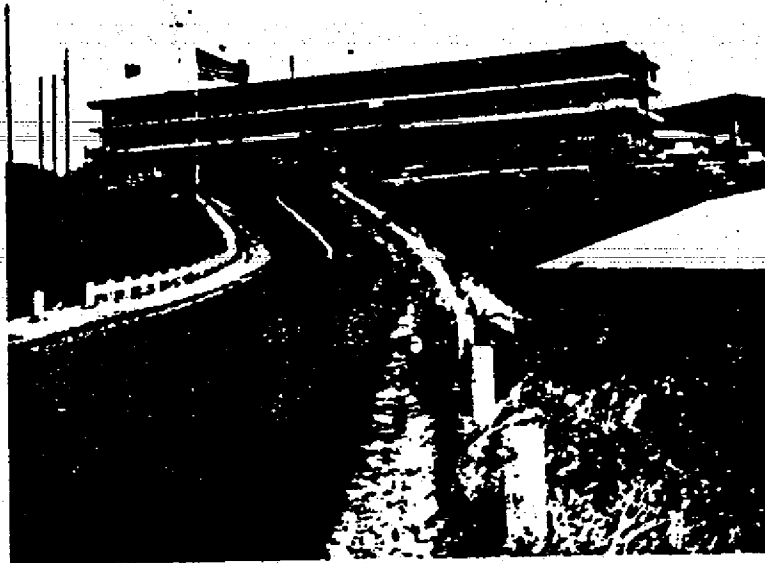






Admiral Chester W. Nimitz holding a press conference at his CINCPAC headquarters, November 24, 1942. Captain L. J. Wiltse, Assistant Chief of Staff, shown.

USN 40044  
Naval History Division  
Department of the Navy

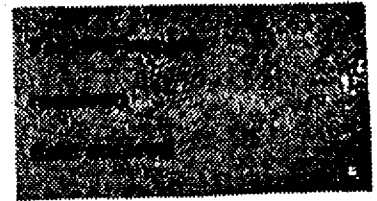


In many ways, this was the most important structure in Hawaii during the war as it housed Admiral Nimitz and his staff. This photograph was taken in early 1946. The building is sited approximately 300 yards beyond the boundaries of the Pearl Harbor National Historic Landmark.

From U. S. Navy, Pacific Division, Naval Facilities Engineering Command. U. S. Navy Base, Pearl Harbor National Historic Landmark Historic Preservation Plan(1978), p. 11-46.

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